

Article

Domestic abuse and the criminal justice system, England and Wales: November 2024

Responses to and outcomes of domestic abuse-related cases in the criminal justice system.

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1 . Other pages in this release

- [Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2024](#)
- [Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2024](#)
- [Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2024](#)
- [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system: November 2024](#)

2 . Main points

Data from different stages of the criminal justice system are based on offences, victims, suspects or defendants and can vary in the way that cases are identified, therefore direct comparisons across data sources should not be made.

- The police recorded 851,062 domestic abuse-related crimes in England and Wales in year ending (YE) March 2024; a 6.6% decrease compared with the previous year, which, in part, reflects recent changes in police recording practices.
- The police made 41.7 arrests per 100 domestic abuse-related reported crimes in YE March 2024; up from 36.1 in YE March 2023 (in the 42 police forces that supplied offence data and complete arrests data in both years).
- The number of referrals of suspects of domestic abuse-related cases from the police to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for a charging decision in England and Wales increased for the second year to 72,641 in YE March 2024 compared with 69,314 in YE March 2023.
- The CPS domestic abuse charging rate in England and Wales increased from 76.5% in YE March 2023 to 79.0% in YE March 2024; the highest charging rate since YE March 2015, when records began.
- There were 51,183 domestic abuse-related CPS prosecutions in England and Wales in YE March 2024, a similar number to YE March 2023 (51,288).
- The percentage of prosecutions leading to a conviction decreased from 76.4% in YE March 2023 to 75.8% in YE March 2024.

3 . Data on domestic abuse and the criminal justice system

[Domestic abuse and the criminal justice system](#)

Dataset | Released 27 November 2024

Data from across the government on responses to and outcomes of domestic abuse cases in the criminal justice system.

[Domestic abuse in England and Wales – Data tool](#)

Dataset | Released 27 November 2024

An interactive tool exploring data at police force area level.

4 . Glossary

Other important terms used in this publication are listed in the Glossary of our [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system: November 2024 article](#).

Charging rate

The charging rate is the number of suspects of Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) domestic abuse-flagged cases that were charged as a proportion of all those that resulted in a legal decision to charge, take no further action, or recommend an out-of-court disposal.

Convictions

Cases where the defendant was convicted following a prosecution, comprising either:

- a conviction after trial: cases in which the defendant pleaded not guilty, but was convicted after the evidence was heard
- a guilty plea: where the defendant pleaded guilty
- a proof in absence: cases comprising lesser offences, which were heard by the court in the absence of the defendant

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is not limited to physical violence and can include a range of abusive behaviours. It can also be experienced as repeated patterns of abusive behaviour to maintain power and control in a relationship. The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) defines domestic abuse as any incident or pattern of incidents between those aged 16 years and over who:

- are a partner
- are an ex-partner
- are a relative
- have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 outlines the following behaviours as abuse:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional, or other abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises children under the age of 18 years who see, or hear, or experience the effects of the abuse as a victim of domestic abuse if they are related or have a parental relationship to the adult victim or perpetrator of the abuse.

Prosecutions

All cases where the defendant(s) were charged, summonsed in court, or charged by way of a postal requisition during the period. This includes those proceeding to a trial or guilty plea, those discontinued and those which could not proceed.

5 . Data sources and quality

This publication presents data on responses to and outcomes of domestic abuse cases from different stages of the criminal justice system. Data are sourced from the Home Office, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

The data are not directly comparable because they are collected on different bases (for example, victims, crimes, suspects, or defendants) and different timescales and reference periods are used to collect the data. Cases may also drop out at any stage of the process. Further information on how domestic abuse cases flow through the criminal justice system and the data sources used in this publication can be found in our [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system: November 2024 article](#).

How the police measure domestic abuse

More information on police measures of domestic abuse and the recent changes to police recording practices which have affected the data can be found in our [Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2024 article](#) and our [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system: November 2024 article](#).

6 . Related links

[Partner abuse in detail, England and Wales: year ending March 2023](#)

Article | Released 24 November 2023

The amount, type and nature of partner abuse experienced in the last year; information from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

7 . Cite this article

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